

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A marine outboard drive comprising a drive unit carrying a propulsion device, a steering shaft, at least one mount assembly including at least one mount member affixed to said drive unit and to a hub member united with said mount member, said hub member being connected to both said drive unit and said steering shaft so as to couple together said drive unit and said steering shaft, a swivel bracket supporting said steering shaft for pivotal movement about a steering axis, and a mount cover generally covering both said mount member and said hub member.

2. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said mount assembly includes a pair of mount members affixed to both sides of said drive unit, said steering shaft is disposed in front of said drive unit, and said mount cover extending generally forwardly of both sides of said drive unit and generally transversely in front of said shaft housing.

3. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said steering shaft has a bottom end, and said mount cover extends lower than the bottom end.

4. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 3, wherein said drive unit includes a lower portion having a top end and extending generally forwardly under the bottom end of said steering shaft, and said mount cover extends lower than the top end of said lower portion.

5. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said drive unit has a lower portion extending generally forwardly under the bottom end of said steering shaft, and said mount cover is affixed to said drive unit at a front portion existing forwardly than the bottom end of said steering shaft.

6. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said mount cover becomes lower toward its front portion.

7. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein two sets of said mount assemblies are disposed so as to be spaced apart from each other vertically, and said mount cover covers the lower set of said mount assemblies.

8. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said mount cover is formed with multiple cover members.

9. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein respective one of said cover members are affixed to said drive unit, said cover members are joined with

each other with a fastener, and said cover members are further affixed to said drive unit with said faster.

10. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said steering shaft has a tubular shape.

5 11. A marine outboard drive comprising a drive unit carrying a propulsion device, a tubular steering shaft having an open bottom end, at least one mount assembly being connected to both said drive unit and said steering shaft, a swivel bracket supporting said steering shaft for pivotal movement about a steering axis, and a cover member generally enclosing the bottom end of said steering shaft between the cover member and the drive unit.

10 12. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 11, wherein said cover member extends lower than the bottom end of said steering shaft.

15 13. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 12, wherein said drive unit includes a lower portion having a top end and extending generally forwardly under the bottom end of said steering shaft, and said cover member extends lower than the top end of said lower portion.

20 14. A marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 11, wherein said cover member has a lower portion extending generally forwardly under the bottom end of said steering shaft, and said cover member is affixed to said drive unit at a front portion existing forwardly than the bottom end of said steering shaft.

25 15. A marine outboard drive comprising a drive unit carrying a propulsion device, a tubular steering shaft having an open bottom end, at least one mount assembly being connected to both said drive unit and said steering shaft, a swivel bracket supporting said steering shaft for pivotal movement about a steering axis, and a means for inhibiting an influx of water into the bottom end of the steering shaft and for protecting the mount assembly.